

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

Claims 1-10 (Canceled)

11. (Currently amended) A biodegradable polymer ~~composition~~ substantially soluble in water and consisting essentially of the following in percent by weight:

- a) 8 to 80% of a high amylose starch modified to include a hydroxyalkyl C<sub>2-6</sub> group or modified by reaction with an anhydride of a carboxylic acid,
- b) 4 to 11% of a water soluble polymer selected from polyvinylacetate, ~~and~~ polyvinyl alcohol or a mixture thereof,
- c) ~~up to~~ 0 to 12% added water,
- d) 0 to ~~10~~ 12% of a polyol plasticizer,
- e) 0.1 to 1.5% of a C<sub>12-22</sub> fatty acid or salt,
- f) the balance being a an unmodified natural starch.

12. (Previously presented) A biodegradable polymer as claimed in claim 11 wherein component e) comprises stearic acid or a salt thereof.

Claim 13 (Cancelled).

14. (Previously presented) A biodegradable polymer as claimed in claim 11 wherein the polyol plasticizer comprises glycerol.

15. (Previously presented) A biodegradable polymer as claimed in claim 11 wherein the polyol plasticizer content is zero and added water is from 10 to 12%.

Claim 16 -19 (Cancelled).

20. (Currently amended) A biodegradable polymer substantially soluble in water and suitable for use in thermoforming rigid packaging products, said polymer consisting essentially

of the following in percent by weight: a) 8-80% high amylose starch modified to include a hydroxyalkyl C<sub>2-6</sub> group or modified by reaction with an anhydride of a carboxylic acid; b) 4-11% of a water soluble polymer comprising polyvinylacetate, polyvinyl alcohol or a mixture thereof; c) up to 12% added water; d) 0.4 to 1.2% of a C<sub>12-22</sub> fatty acid or salt.

Claim 21 (Cancelled).

22. (Currently amended) A biodegradable polymer composition ~~composition~~ substantially soluble that has been adapted to form a film, said polymer composition consisting essentially of in percent by weight:

- a) 8 to 80% of a high amylose starch modified to include a hydroxyalkyl C<sub>2-6</sub> group or modified by reaction with an anhydride of a carboxylic acid
- b) 4 to 11% of a water soluble polymer selected from polyvinyl acetate, polyvinyl alcohol and copolymers of ethylene and vinyl alcohol
- c) 10 to 16% of a polyol plasticizer
- d) up to 12% added water
- e) 0.1 to 1.5% of a C<sub>12-22</sub> fatty acid or salt
- f) the balance being ~~a~~ an unmodified natural starch.

23. (Currently amended) A ~~composition~~ biodegradable polymer as claimed in claim 22 wherein component e) comprises stearic acid.

24. (Previously presented) A composition as claimed in claim 22 wherein component b) comprises a polyvinyl alcohol .

Claims 25-53 (Cancelled).